



The mission of the Westmoreland Heritage Trail is to manage and maintain the trail from Saltsburg to Trafford, in partnership with like-minded groups, Westmoreland County Parks, and the associated municipalities the trail passes through. The trail will be promoted for walking and biking activities and to provide for recreation, education, volunteerism, tourism, and historic and environmental conservation. (www.westmorelandheritagetrail.com)

WHT March Board Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2025

Meeting Held Via Zoom

Meeting Attendees:

- Board (14): Michael Bertonaschi, Karen Rose Cercone, Rob Cronauer, Wendy Davis, Jerry Detar, Chad Emahizer, Liz Ferri, Rick Fisher, Geri Lombardo, Chris Panichella, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Malcolm Sias, Ann Wade
- Absent Board (7): Mike Banda, Kerry Jobe, Monica Meehan, Darrin Miller, Pat Norton, Tom Marcin, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz
- Guests and Members (3): Louise Fisher, Steve Ising, Jeff Richards

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

- 1. WHT MISSION STATEMENT** – was read by the secretary.
- 2. PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS** – the president thanked everyone who attended the Comedy Night fundraising event, especially the volunteers that helped with the event. He also reminded the board that representatives from Friends of the Riverfront will attend our April in-person meeting to discuss their progress on the Turtle Creek Connector Trail.
- 3. PUBLIC INPUT/INTRODUCTIONS** – none
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. The minutes from the February 13, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Chad Emahizer, seconded by Ann Wade.
- 5. TREASURER’S REPORT** – Chris Panichella
 - a. New and renewed memberships in February 2025 amounted to \$1460 as a result of the spring membership drive. Donations came in at \$645 for the month. Comedy Night income (ticket sales plus sponsorships) amounted to \$13,045 for a total revenue of \$15,150. The Treasurer noted that the payments for the event would be coming in March, along with the final week of sales and sponsorship income. Expenses for February included visitor amenities (newsletter printed copies) for \$99 and miscellaneous (cost of Comedy Night tickets) for \$120, for a total of \$219 in expenses.
 - b. As of February 26, 2025, we had \$14,684 in our Money Market accounts (S&T Bank), \$78,146 in our checking account (S&T Bank), \$40,990 in one Certificate of Deposit (S&T Bank), \$50,000 in a second Certificate of Deposit (S&T Bank) and \$68,488 invested with Fidelity (Wealth Enhancement Advisors). Our building fund stands at \$29,776, making our total funds \$282,084.
 - c. On a motion by Karen Rose Cercone, seconded by Ann Wade, the February Treasurer’s reports were approved.

6. ITEMS FOR ACTION AND/OR INFORMATION

- a. Official Correspondence – none
- b. Upcoming Events – Stan Rudge
 - WBNC / TCWA Earth Day Watershed Walk (April 22, 5-7 PM, Zone 5) On a motion by Michael Bertonaschi, seconded by Geri Lombardo, this event was approved.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Preliminary Update on Comedy Night – Rob Cronauer reported that all went well thanks to our many volunteers, and that planning has already begun for next year.
- b. Final Update on Spring Membership Drive – Wendy Davis reported that we received fifty new or renewed memberships in February and the total number of members is now 510.
- c. Property near Industrial Drive – Stan Rudge and Jeff Richards reported the sales agreement has been signed by both Richard Kacin and Mark Price from the RTC. The closing will be on March 31, 2025. WCBPR and RTC are now working to submit a grant application to DCNR for property acquisition. Non-motorized trail funding is an extremely competitive category (many nonprofits can apply) and so we have been cautioned that the grant might not come through.
- d. Bridge inspections for Zone 1 – Stan Rudge reported that the RTC has covered both their \$5500 share and the WHT's \$5500 share of the cost for the Loyalhanna and Conemaugh bridge inspections. Contracts have been signed, and we are now waiting for the work to be scheduled.
- e. Rey Peduzzi and Noel Grimm Memorials – Malcolm Sias shared the final plaque designs approved by the families. They will be installed with dedication ceremonies for the families.
- f. Gateway Arch – Stan Rudge reported that the arch will be manufactured soon, and will be installed when the weather is better. A dedication ceremony will be held in May or June.

8. NEW BUSINESS

No new items were brought up for discussion.

9. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Real Estate, Planning, Engineering and Construction** – Jeff Richards
 - PennDOT's Middle Gap Project (Morosini Farm Road to Rangos Trail Head) held a scoping field view on March 6. It was a cold and windy day, but 25 people showed up to participate. The next step is to define the scope of work for GAI Consultants, who will create a set of biddable construction drawings over the next two years, beginning in late April.
 - Rob Cronauer reported that the Westmoreland Conservation District's grant submission to the Pennsylvania Growing Greener Fund for construction of the Morosini parking lot (a future trailhead when Zone 3 comes online) was unfortunately denied. Funding efforts will continue in cooperation with the Westmoreland Conservancy.
- b. **Public Relations** – Vicki Rudge
 - Facebook followers stand at 3787, Instagram at 126 and X /Twitter at 162.
 - WHT – Vicki Rudge and Louise Fisher brought several different kinds of WHT merchandise to Comedy Night and sold \$770 worth of the new shirts and hats. (We also received a \$130 donation from one of the featured comedians as a portion of his book sales). Clothing will be available through our website, at meetings, and occasionally at trail head events.
 - The Trail Town Festival (Ann Wade) now has a DJ, location, and food vendors set.

- c. **Membership** – Wendy Davis
 - Membership at the end of February stood at 510 active members. Wendy will notify our 500th member that merchandise is now available from our store for his gift.
 - d. **Website** - Chad Emahizer
 - The WHT website had 1115 visitors in February, an increase from January.
 - A web store has been added to handle both memberships and merchandise sales. The store will go live sometime in mid-April.
 - e. **Maintenance** – Rick Fisher and Chad Emahizer
 - Rick Fisher reported that some equipment maintenance will be done in preparation for the spring season. Some new tools and a new lawnmower have been purchased using grant funds and are now in the maintenance sheds. A thank-you letter will be sent to Roy Weil and Mary Steel.
 - Some large trees are down alongside the trail in Zones 4 and 5. They are not blocking the trail, but are right on the shoulder and will need to be cleared.
 - e. **Fundraising** – Rob Cronauer
 - Rob will be sending out thank-you letters to the donors and sponsors.
 - f. **Trail Ambassadors** – Stan Rudge
 - Trail Ambassador Training went well, with 16 people attending from various RTC trail chapters.
 - Electric dirt bikes and electric single-wheeled vehicles have been seen on the trail. Stan strongly recommended that we refrain from confrontations with users of these vehicles.
 - g. **Regional Trail Corporation / Trans-Allegheny Trails** – Stan Rudge
 - Trans-Allegheny Trails have a meeting coming up in April.
 - The RTC met recently. President Mark Price has been very supportive of our property acquisition along Route 66.
 - h. **Municipal Representatives**
 - Father Jay from the St. Marys and St. Johns would like to sponsor a ‘blessing of the bicycles’ around Easter time in Export. Lizzie would like a trail board member to help coordinate it. Stan suggested possibly moving it to our Poker Run date instead, and Lizzie will suggest that.
 - Bathrooms in the B-Y Park will open in the beginning of April.
 - A water restoration company has bought the former Lisa’s Bike Shop in Trafford. They have placed some railroad ties very close to our property.
 - Michael Bertonaschi will contact the Christian Alliance church in Trafford to talk about trail users parking at the far end of their lot.
 - Paul Estok reported that bids are going out a second time for the Murrysville Valley Park facility and bridge. The money needs to be committed by the end of the year.
- 10.** Next month’s WHT Meeting will be held in person on April 10, 2025 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM at the Lamplighter. Friends of the Riverfront reps will attend to update us on their progress.
- 11.** On a motion by Vicki Rudge, seconded by Karen Rose Cercone, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Rose Cercone, Secretary

Westmoreland Heritage Trail 2025 Event Calendar

Month	Date	Time	Event	Location
JAN	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
FEB	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
MAR	7 & 8	6 PM	Comedy Night at LIVE Casino	Greensburg
	11	6:30 PM	Trail Ambassador New / Recertifying Training	WCD Barn
	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
APR				
	10	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting (with FOTR/PEC reps)	Lamplighter
	22	5 PM – 7 PM	TCWA & WBNC Earth Day Watershed Walk	Zone 5
	26	8 AM - 2PM	Norwin AF-JR-ROTC Bataan March	Zones 4 & 5
MAY	8	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
JUN	7	9 AM – 2 PM	Community Festival / Poker Run	Export
	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
JUL				
	10	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
AUG				
	14	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
SEP				
	11	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
OCT				
	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
NOV				
	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
DEC				
	11	6 PM	WHT Volunteer Appreciation Night	TBA